

NOBODY'S MAN:-:By E. Phillips Oppenheim

THIS BEGINS THE STORY

Andrew Tallente, political leader, has married for money. His wife accepted him to forward ambitions to a title. She has a cold and selfish temperament and is interested in his position. Andrew, a Police Commissioner, has a sudden suspicion that her husband is responsible for the disappearance, Lady Jane Partington, a beautiful and wealthy aristocrat interested in labor problems, is a member who interests Andrew greatly. Andrew has mixed in an unusual position papers, and in an unusual position, on the edge of a cliff has struck him. The secretary fell over, Andrew is kept under observation by Inspector Julian, of the police. Stephen Darrey, the self-sacrificing Labor Party Leader, with Miller, a coarse-grained scoundrel, and Mrs. Muller, a woman of loose character, have been plotting to take the leadership. He means their party, and some notorious holdouts take up the battle. The Preacher in action, including a picture. This involves his wife, who threatens divorce.

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

CHAPTER XII

DARREY had been called unexpectedly to the north, to a great labor conference, and Tallente, waiting for his return, promised within the next forty-eight hours, found himself rather at a loose end. He avoided the club, where he would have been likely to meet his late political associates, and spent the morning after his visit to the Prime Minister, straying around the Park, trying visits to his tailor and bistro, and lunched by himself in a little tea-room, the most aristocratic in Westminister, and discovered Miss Muller's flat. A busy young person in pinneez and a long overall, who announced herself as Miss Muller's secretary, was in the act of showing off dinner. Muller was in the bed.

"Any news?" she asked, after Tallente had found it impossible to keep his hands from her.

"I am waiting for Mr. Darrey's return. No, there is no particular news that I know of."

"Darrey had to go north for a few days," Muller confided confidentially. "It ought to give you time, though one had to stay and look after things in the House. But it is a pity he has been called away just now."

Tallente presented a somewhat hasty, took out his unopened umbrella and an ill-brushed bowler hat.

"Well, I suppose he is going," he concluded. "If there is nothing else, can you tell me what he is doing? I must look up to Mr. Tallente. It's all the same, you know. Darrey or me, Denes House, in Parliament Street, or the like. You haven't forgotten your way there yet, I expect."

With which parting shaft, Mrs. James Miller departed, and the secretary, opening the door of Miss Muller's sitting room, ushered in Tallente.

Miss Muller, she announced, with a smile, "I am fresh from a short engagement, but rather unended conversation with Mr. Miller."

Nora was evidently rather surprised not to find him. "He's all the same," she said, "a dark blue prince, frank, talkative right up to the throat. He was a real star, from his own point of view."

"A little more tactfully, how nicely shaped forehead. She was seated before a round table covered with papers, and Tallente fancied, even as he crossed the threshold, that there was an electric atmosphere in the little apartment—an impression which he got along with the shock of the unexpected confirmation.

The change in her expression, however, as she recognized her visitor, was instantaneous. A delightful smile of welcome faded away the somberness of her face.

"My dear man," she exclaimed, "come and sit down and help me forget that annoying person who has just gone."

Tallente smiled.

"Miller is not one of your favorites, then?"

"Isn't he the most impossible person who ever breathed?" she replied. "He was a conscientious objector during the war, a sex fanatic since. Mr. Darrey had to use all his influence to keep him out of prison for writing those scurrilous articles in the *Independent*. I mean, the type of the most callous, most unscrupulous persons I ever met. For some reason or other, Stephen Darrey believes in him. He has a wonderful talent for organization and a good deal of influence with the trade unions. By the by, it's all right about the muds!"

She rang the bell and ordered tea. Tallente sipped for a moment about the room, the four walls of which were well-filled bookshelves, but the mural decorations consisted—except for one wonderful male figure, copy of a well-known Rodin, of statistical charts and shaded maps. There were only two signs of feminine occupation: an immense bowl of red roses, ringed with strange objects, and a small shelf of dried flowers and various references, and a wide lacquered sofa, drawn up to the window, through which the tops of a little clump of lime trees were just visible. As she turned back to him, he noticed with many compunction the lines of her ample but graceful figure, the more remarkable because she was neither tall nor very slender.

"So that is your wife at Charing Cross yesterday afternoon?" she remarked, a little abruptly.

He assented in silence. Her eyes sparkled with glee.

"I know that Lady Clunton is a terrible gossip," she went on. "Was she telling me the truth when she said that your married life was not an entire success?"

"She was telling you the truth," Tallente admitted.

"I like to know everything," she suggested quietly. "You must remember that we shall probably become intimate."

"I did my wife the injustice of marrying her for money," Tallente explained. "She thought I was still poor when we got married, and became a social position such as she desired. Our marriage was a double failure. I found no opportunity of making use of her money, and she was disappointed with the value she received for it. We have within the best few days agreed to separate. Now you know everything," he added, with a little smile, "and curiously enough, considering the brevity of our acquaintance, you know it before anybody else in the world except one person."

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"I like to know everything about the people I am interested in," she admitted. "Besides, your story sounds so quaint. It seems to belong, somehow or other, to the days of Anthony Trollope and Jane Austen. I suppose that is because I always feel that I am living a little way in the future."

Tea was being served, and she cleared for the reception, it arrived.

Afterward she lit a cigarette and threw herself upon the lounge.

"Turn your chair around toward me," she invited. "This is the hour I like best of any during the day. Do you see what beautiful view I have of the Houses of Parliament? And there across the river, behind that mist, the esplanade begins. Sometimes I lie here and think. I see right into Bermonsey."



If there is anything I can do for you in the chief's absence, look me up, Mr. Tallente.

and Rotherhithe and all those places and think out the lives of the people as they are being lived. Then I look through those wonderful windows there—they glint in the sunlight, don't they?—and I think the most shock whom they have seen to plead these causes. Don't you know Powers Hill exhausts him, with his writhing, shouting himself into a resurrection, drawing from pictures of Tolson and apparent wrongs, and a hundred or so well-dressed legislators whisper behind the palms of their hands, make their plans for the evening, and read into their appointed ledges—what is there in the world that is more known?

"But what was your springing?" he asked. "Your father, for instance?"

"It's this going to be a pill for you?" she implored, with slight wrinkled forehead.

"He was professor of English at Dresden University. We English are not so bad, but we are not quite so good as the French."

"The Latin Party is as yet understood ten years ago, was a painful combination of selfish aims without the greatest idea of co-operation. It is for the souls of the people we stand, we Democrats, whether they till the fields or sweat in the factories, whether they bend over a desk or go back and forth across the ocean, or live in small houses along, where they belong to the respectable middle classes, or the after-the-war legislation did its best to break us to the class of actual manual laborers."

"And you live here alone?" he asked.

"With my secretary, the frayed-haired young person who was just given a question. The principles for which we stand never existed before, even in memory. No party has ever been able to preach them within the realm of practical politics, because the party has been uncompromising."

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"Of course we have," she pursued sharply. "It isn't like you to ask such a question. The principles for which we stand never existed before, even in memory. No party has ever been able to preach them within the realm of practical politics, because the party has been uncompromising."

"I sometimes think," she went on, with a smile, "that all one's tendencies toward the unusual can be got rid of in opinions. Susan, for instance—that is my secretary's name—pronounces herself unashamedly in favor of free love, but I don't think she has ever allowed a man to touch her life."

"What will your position really be?" he asked.

"I don't see what place a man like Miller has in your scheme of things," she replied.

"Miller is a humor," she said. "He has passed as a man of brains for half a generation. His only real achievement is an unerring but selfish capacity for fooling himself to the right cause. We can't ignore him. He has a following, but it is not large, and he does not represent any principles, no, not even if he were a tadark."

"What will be your position really be?" he asked.

"We are absorbing the best of them, day by day," he answered.

"What is left of either will be merged in the same. The people will come to us. Their ideas will come in and we will break them, too, so that they will fit us."

"You are a sophist," he declared.

"I have not your remarkable ingenuity," he retorted.

To be continued tomorrow

—Continued, page 22, *Red Système*, Inc.

Uncommon Sense : : A Questionnaire

BY JOHN BLAKE

WE were Thomas A. Edison and wanted to sweep a force of young men to help develop a great industry, we should have to preach their knowledge of history and geography and the great American ways of power.

Neither would we exhaust their brains with an examination into a fund of information which any of them, by a little study, could find in any library.

What will be the two main reasons the Latin Party?" he asked.

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What can you do?" he asked.

"I have no idea," she said.

How do you form them?

Do you think you have a chance to succeed, or not?

It is not why.

What is your business, what is yours?

How do you expect to turn out?

Do you expect perfect justice?

Do you have opinions, yourself, or turn out to be?

What can you do?" he asked.

How do you expect to acquire the ability to do better?

What is your objective in life?

Are you going to work hard or harder than anyone else?

What are the qualities that attract you to them?

What are your grievances?

How do you form them?

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